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FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
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INFO RUEHDL/AMEMBASSY DUBLIN 0017
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0194
RUEHLGB/AMEMBASSY KIGALI 4842
RUEHDS/AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA 1487

UNCLAS KINSHASA 000150

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DEPARTEMENT FOR AF/C AND H

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OREP](#) [AMGT](#) [ASEC](#) [AFIN](#) [CG](#)

SUBJECT: POST WELCOMES CODEL CHRIS SMITH

REF: STATE 13416

¶1. Post welcomes CODEL Chris Smith to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) from February 18 to February 21, 2009. Hotel reservations are confirmed at the Grand Hotel in Kinshasa for the nights of February 18-19 for Congressman Smith and Staff Member Mark Milosch. Rooms are \$250 per night, including breakfast, tax and service, and are within per diem. Contact information for the Grand Hotel is: Avenue Batatala, Kinshasa, DRC, tel: 243-81-811-0003; Fax: 243-81-555-3005. Rooms have been made available at the U.S. diplomatic residence in Goma for the night of February 20. Rooms are \$100 per night and are within per diem. Embassy Kinshasa will meet and assist on arrival.

¶2. POINT OF CONTACT

Political Officer Steve Kenoyer will be the Control Officer for the visit and can be reached at:

Office Phone: 011-243-81-556-0151 ext. 2620
Cell Phone : 011-243-81-880-8309
Email : kenoyersm@state.gov

¶3. (SBU) VISA REQUIREMENTS

A valid Congolese visa is required of all American passport holders, whether diplomatic, official or tourist.

¶4. FISCAL DATA REQUIREMENTS

Fiscal data has been received.

¶5. ALL VISITS MUST COMMENCE IN KINSHASA

In accordance with post policy, all visits to the Democratic Republic of Congo which require country clearance are to commence in Kinshasa, the country's capital. Travel to other regions of the country including the Kivus, is to be undertaken from Kinshasa. Embassy Kinshasa will provide assistance with these travel arrangements.

¶6. AIRPORT ADVICE FOR ARRIVING PASSENGERS

Procedures at N'djili Airport are changing as airport officials try to strengthen security procedures.

After deplaning, please proceed to the Arrivals Hall. Travelers will be met inside the arrivals hall by an Embassy expeditor who will then walk them through immigration. Please have passports and health certificates ready for the Embassy expeditor. After clearing Immigration, travelers will then proceed to exit, met by the control officer, and directed to the vehicle. The expeditor will then collect baggage claim tickets and passports, collect the bags, and have them delivered to the Grand Hotel. Please be prepared to give the expeditor one USD per bag to pay the porters.

While at the airport, travelers are warned to not, repeat not, pay money or give their documents to anyone other than the Embassy expeditor. This also applies to individuals in uniform, who may offer their services. Be polite but do not accept their assistance.

¶7. CUSTOMS AND ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT

If you will be carrying tools, heavy cases, or any electronic equipment other than personal devices, contact your control officer with specific information that can be passed to the expeditor for assistance with customs clearance.

¶8. SECURITY

Kinshasa is a critical threat crime post. Recent robberies indicate the targeting of Americans; all visitors should remain vigilant and cautious during their stay in Kinshasa. The RSO advises that you exercise caution in the areas around hotels, and that you do not travel after nightfall unless accompanied by someone familiar with the security situation in Kinshasa. TDY personnel should not use any form of local transportation and should refrain from displaying/using camera as in public.

¶9. CURRENCY

The use of dollars in the DRC is legal and acceptable for most transactions. Travelers arriving in the DRC with more than USD 10,000 must fill out a currency declaration. Travelers departing the DRC are not allowed to take out more than USD 10,000 in cash. Although there are some newly-installed ATM machines the RSO does not yet advocate their use. However, USG personnel are authorized USD and Franc Congolais accommodation exchange at the Embassy and/or USAID cashier; personal or travelers' checks are acceptable. Most personnel use Franc Congolais only for small purchases and tips.

American Express, Visa, Master Card, and Diner's Club are accepted in payment of bills at Kinshasa's two major hotels. However, very few other businesses in the Congo accept credit cards and their use outside of the major hotels is discouraged. Cashing traveler's checks outside the Embassy is generally not advised because banks charge substantial fees for cashing them; traveler's checks are rarely accepted at all outside of Kinshasa.

¶10. MEDICAL

MALARIA: Congo is a malaria-affected area. All travelers should consult with medical personnel and take malaria prophylactics as appropriate, before arriving in Kinshasa.

YELLOW FEVER: You must have a valid yellow fever vaccination and your yellow vaccination card when you arrive. You may be charged a fine of \$50-\$100 without proof of vaccination.

¶11. You may visit the Embassy's Intranet website at <http://kinshasa.state.gov>. While still under construction, information is being added daily that you may find useful.

¶12. Have a good trip. Post looks forward to seeing you in Kinshasa.

GARVELINK